

The NYISE Museum and Archive

The NYISE Museum and Archive has three public areas. This walkthrough will take you first down the long **Hallway Image Gallery**. Down this hallway you will find halfway down on the right the two doors to the **Main Exhibit Room** and on the left the doorway to **The Fanny Crosby Reading Room**. Accordingly there are three audio files, one for each area.

Wav File list:

1. Image Gallery – 9 minutes
2. Main Exhibit Area – 17 minutes
3. Fanny Crosby Reading Room – 6 minutes

Hallway Image Gallery

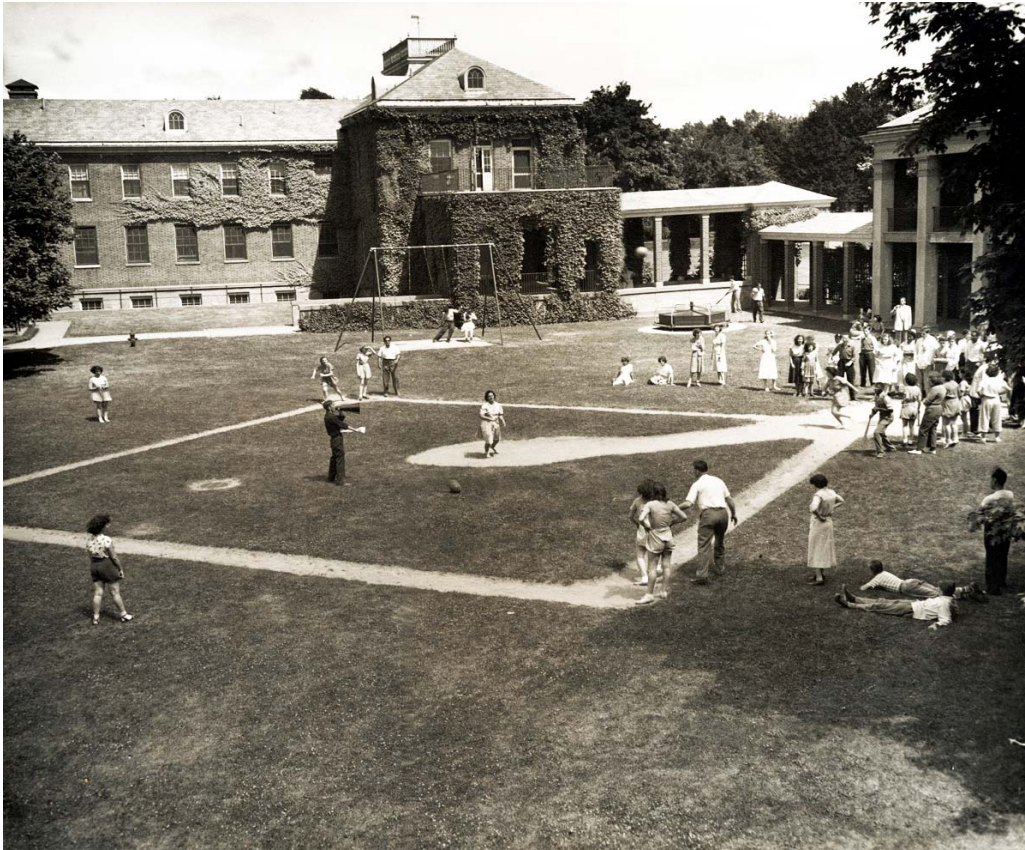
The rowing program at NYI began in the spring of 1951. The Institute has been the only school for the blind in America to include rowing as a team sport in its athletics program.



For over twenty years, NYI held its practices on the Harlem River near Spuyten Duyvil. They participated in many regattas, competitions and demonstration races. Institute crews traveled to many cities in New England. Seth W. Hoard was coach from 1956 – 1973. Five framed photographs are on the wall shows the students of the team. The first one shows them working on repairing one of the boats in the basement of Wood Russ. The others show team practicing.



Image Gallery: NYIEB 1951



Seven 16 inch by 20 inch photographs depict student life at The New York



Institute. On the left wall are 4 photographs: students square dancing, two students performing on a piano and bass, a teacher and student using a radio transmitter and the graduating class of 1951. On the opposite wall are three photographs: girls playing kickball behind Wood-Russ, a multiple exposure image of a Braille

reader and a student in chemistry class heating a glass rod over a gas burner.

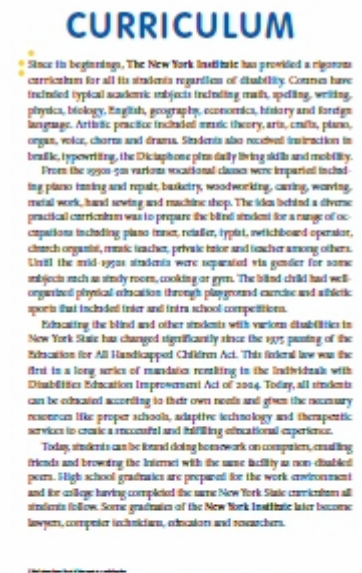
The transmitter photograph is of Leo Sadowsky, the first deaf blind person to receive his federal amateur radio license. He is working with Robert Gunderson a science teacher that taught radio classes. He is remembered fondly by many of our alumni.



Right side – Curriculum Poster

Curriculum: Text on the poster follows:

Since its beginnings, **The New York Institute** has provided a rigorous curriculum for all its students regardless of disability. Courses have included typical academic subjects including math, spelling, writing, physics, biology, English, geography, economics, history and foreign language. Artistic practice included music theory, arts, crafts, piano, organ, voice, chorus and drama. Students also received instruction in Braille, typewriting, the Dictaphone plus daily living skills and mobility. From the 1930s-50s various vocational classes were imparted including piano tuning and repair, basketry, woodworking, caning, weaving, metal work, hand sewing and machine shop. The idea behind a diverse practical curriculum was to prepare the blind student for a range of occupations including piano tuner, retailer, typist, switchboard operator, church organist, music teacher, private tutor and teacher among others. Until the mid-1950s students were separated via gender for some subjects such as study room, cooking or gym. The blind child had well organized physical education through playground exercise and athletic sports that included inter and intra school competitions. Educating the blind and other students with various disabilities in New York State has changed significantly since the 1975 passing of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act. This federal law was the first in a long series of mandates resulting in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004. Today, all students can be educated according to their own needs and given the necessary resources like proper schools, adaptive technology and therapeutic services to create a successful and fulfilling educational experience. Today, students can be found doing homework on computers, e-mailing friends and browsing the Internet with the same facility as non-disabled peers. High school graduates are prepared for the work



environment and for college, having completed the same New York State curriculum all students follow. Some graduates of **The New York Institute** later become lawyers, computer technicians, educators and researchers.”

At the bottom of the poster is a photo of a blind veteran learning shoe repair in a workshop class.

To the left of the curriculum poster are two 16 inch by 20 inch photographs circa 1951. One is of a young girl learning about time with a tactile clock on the desktop. The second photograph is of a young woman in a chemistry classroom pouring a chemical into a test tube.

Mechanical Department Poster

To the left of the two framed photographs is another large poster that contains three photographs of students in classrooms of the mechanical department where learning stems from tool usage to basket making to weaving on a loom.

Top Image: A group of boys in a woodshop with the caption “learning to use tools and make useful objects”.

Middle Image: A group of young ladies weaving baskets in a classroom with the caption “a class of basket making”.

Bottom Image: Two young ladies weaving cloth at looms.



Left side – Today

In 1986 **The New York Institute** was formally renamed **The New York Institute for Special Education** to reflect the expanded focus and commitment to children with a variety of disabilities. Today approximately 300 students ages 3 to 21 attend its three instructional programs. The **Schermerhorn Program** offers diverse educational services to meet the needs of legally blind children 3 to 21. In the early 1980s, the **Van Cleve Program** was created for children with learning and emotional disabilities not served in a traditional school setting. This highly structured program includes counseling for students and families in a supportive and small setting of six students to one teacher and teacher assistant. In 1987, the **Readiness Program** for developmentally delayed pre-schoolers was established to serve an ever growing population of children who exhibit delays in areas including speech, motor skills, language acquisition, auditory and visual discrimination. The school has changed significantly over the years to meet the changing needs of children with disabilities, within the context of significant changes in public special education services. Committed to improving education on a national level, the **Cornerstone Literacy Initiative** is the first New York Institute program that focuses on literacy instruction, kindergarten through third grade. Cornerstone provides staff development in urban and rural public school districts with high poverty populations in various part of the country, including Talladega, Alabama, Springfield, Massachusetts and Bridgeport, Connecticut. The Institute also serves as a student teaching, intern and training site for many universities and organizations. The campus hosts **The Early Intervention Training Institute**, a joint effort with the Albert Einstein College of Medicine. The school was also a training site in collaboration with The National Association of State Directors of Special Education to inform local administrators about educational needs of students with visual impairments.

TODAY...

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To the right of the of the Today Poster, at right of the Crosby Reading Room doorway is a large poster with two photographs.



Caption: Like modern day school-to-work programs, early classes at **The New York Institute** included trade workshops where students learned about industry and then sold their articles for earnings. Willow baskets, bandboxes, carpets, mats and mattresses were some of the items created in the manufacturing department.

Caption: Course of study in the early years of **The New York Institute** also included math, history, geography, writing, spelling and grammar. This historical photograph documents a small class of students in the midst of a lesson in a classroom filled with books and small sculptural-maquettes (scale models).



Main Exhibit Room

NYIB Glass Panels and Braillewriters



On top of the two wooden display boxes are 6 braillewriters that were developed in the 20th century. At each side of the display are antique glass panel brought to Pelham Parkway from the original school building when the school was located on Ninth Avenue in Manhattan. The glass panels are 5 feet tall and about two and half feet wide. The glass has written on it in 4 inch gold lettering “New York Institution for the Blind. Chartered 1831”. The glass is surrounded with a rich mahogany wood frame and molding.

The Picht Braillewriter (1901)

The Picht Braille writer was invented by Oscar Picht, the Director of the Provincial School for the Blind in Bromberg, Germany.

The Banks Pocket Writer (1928)

Dr. Alfred Banks of San Diego, California invented the Banks Pocket Writer. The unit was produced by the International Business Machines Corporation (IBM) and made available through the Lions Clubs.

The Jauny Braillewriter (circa 1930 -1940s)

The Jauny Braillewriter was distributed by the American Foundation for the Overseas Blind of Paris, France. The 21 by 8 inch carriage makes this braillewriter very unique. A knob on the left side (missing) of the machine controls the storage of the paper that is then wound around a $\frac{3}{4}$ inch solid steel rod. The knob on the right side controls the paper advance.

The Foundation Writer (1933)

The Foundation Writer was manufactured by the L.C. Smith Typewriter Company from 1933 to 1947 for the American Foundation for the Blind. Approximately 2500 writers were produced.

The Marburg Braillewriter (circa 1949)

The Marburg Braillewriter is an updated version of the Picht Braillewriter. It can accommodate sheets up to 11 inches with a maximum of 41 cells per line. The machine was manufactured in the U.S. zone of Germany after World War II.

New Hall Braille Writer (1940 – 1972)

Designed and manufactured by the American Printing House for the Blind, the New Hall Braille Writer was designed to be rugged and suitable for school use and sold for \$52.50 in 1950. It was a modernized version of the 1892 Hall Braillewriter. The first Braille writing machine, the **Hall Braille writer**, was invented in 1892 by Frank H. Hall, superintendent of the Illinois School for the Blind.



On the wall above the Braillewriters is a 3 foot by 5 foot circa 1890 image that shows six students and an instructor all seated in a long narrow room. There is a long row of shelves on the wall and several dozen embossed books are visible. Each student is seated in front of a Kleidograph New York Point writer.

Wall Poster 1: School Images



Against the wall is a 3 foot by 6 foot poster that shows three images of the various school buildings. The top image is a circa 1890 image of the school building when we were known as the New York Institution for the Blind which was located at 34th Street and 9th Avenue. The image emphasizes the abundance of nature before the area became industrialized.

The second image is a photograph of the 9th Avenue school after a 4th floor was added to the structure. The building lost its gothic architecture and has a more Victorian appearance. The surrounding area of the school is much more urban and turned into paved city blocks. The photograph was taken from the platform of the elevated 9th Avenue subway which is no longer existence.

The third image is a photograph of the school here on Pelham Parkway taken about 1924. It is an aerial view of the campus that includes Schermerhorn Hall, three houses for boys and two houses for girls, the teacher's house, the

principal's house and the dining/service building. There is no Pelham Parkway service road and the flagpole is on the parkway side of Schermerhorn surrounded by a full driveway circle that extends to the center of the parkway. The buildings at the west end of the campus (Bronxwood) like the Van Cleve Building and this building had not been built yet.

Glass Display Case 2: Early Systems of Embossing Codes

Inside the case are two volumes of embossed books. One is a chapter of the bible in Moon type. Moon type is the invention by William Moon in 1845 when he formulated the idea of using 14 embossed shapes used at various angles to represent the alphabet. The Moon system is considered easier to learn by those who lose their sight later in life. The Moon code is not completely extinct. It is used with seniors mostly in the United Kingdom and the Royal National Institute for the Blind in London, England still sells some Moon products.

The Moon Alphabet

A	B	C	D	E	F
∧	∪	⊂	⊃	⌒	⌒
G	H	I	J	K	L
∩	⊙		⋈	<	⌒
M	N	O	P	Q	R
⌒	∩	⊙	⌒	⌒	⌒
S	T	U	V	W	X
/	—	∪	∇	∩	>
Y	Z	AND	THE	!	?
⌒	∩	Σ	⌒	!	?
⋮	⋅	⋅	⋅	<	>
⋅	⋅	⋅	⋅	⋅	⋅

(Image of the Moon Alphabet)

The second volume in Boston Line book was recently donated to the Institute by the Ethelbert B. Crawford Public Library in Monticello, New York. The book is Volume one of a Bible published in 1870. The book is opened to Chapter one of the Book of Genesis.

boston line vs. Philadelphia

Embossed writing in the United States was complicated because the Perkins School for the Blind advocated and published a more angular style alphabet while the Overbrook School for the Blind published an alphabet that was more rounded.

Subway Art

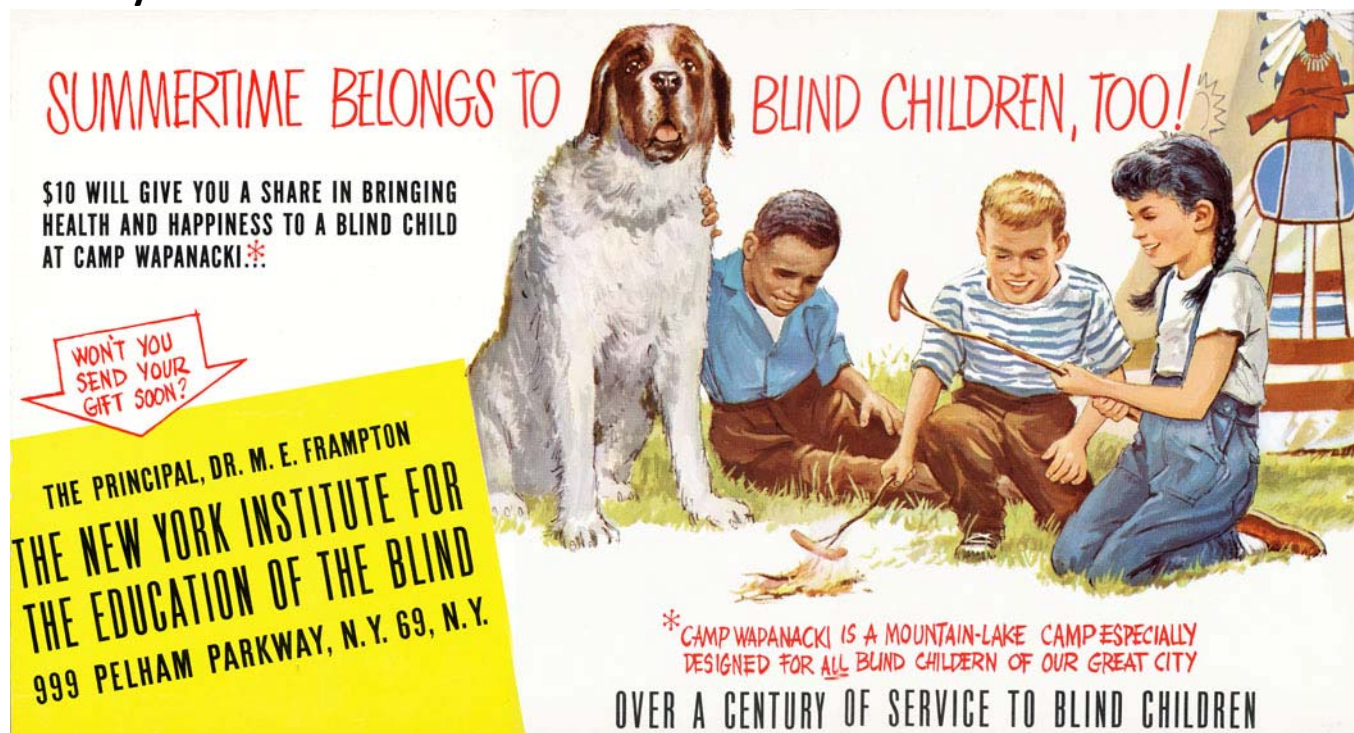


Image of one of the many Subway advertisements The New York Institute placed in NYC Subways. The poster is titled "Summertime Belongs To Blind Children, Too!". It has 3 campers cooking hot dogs over a fire with a Saint Bernard dog at their side.

Kleidograph



In 1894, after three years of effort, William Bell Wait invented the Kleidograph, a machine for embossing the New York Point system on paper. The machine was sold by the school and was designed for use with one hand leaving the other free to read. It uses the eight point alphabet not the six dots that the Braille alphabet uses today. A New York Point cell is typically 4 dots wide and 2 cells high. The four lower keys activate the two keys above, enabling one to emboss all eight dots with the right hand. The two left keys were used for punctuation and the wooden board surface allowed the user to read what was typed on the paper.

Kleidograph – Adapted for 6 cell Braille (1933)

This version of the Kleidograph is a converted version that produces the modern 6 cell braille used around the world today. While the machine looks a bit battle weary, it is a survivor of what was called the "**War of the Dots**". Many contentious battles were fought over which code best served the needs of persons with blindness.

Dress Case and Student Desk



The student's seat and desk here was used at the 9th Avenue school building. There is a framed photograph of students sitting at such a desk. Taken circa 1890, the photograph shows students doing caning projects and making baskets in a workroom.

On the wall above the desk is a large wooden case that houses a small handmade lace pink dress and bouquet of cloth flowers. There is a small sign at the top that reads "homemaking project by ninth year student including hand and machine sewing".

On the desk top sits a 1920s doll that we have named "Archive Annie". She is sitting in a basket of the type the students in the photograph would have been making. Annie

was found in a 4th floor storeroom dirty, broken and tattered. She has been restored to a pristine condition and wears the dress she was found in.

With her in the basket is a t-shirt that would have been worn by Camp Wapanacki supporters. Camp Wapanacki was owned and operated by the Institute for over 50 years. It was located near Hardwick, Vermont and is run today by the Girl Scouts as a camp. Elsewhere in the museum, are posters about Camp Wapanacki that would have been seen in New York City subway cars in the 1960s and 70s seeking donations.



Wall Poster 2: War of the Dots

Against the wall is another 3 foot by 6 foot panel titled “War of the Dots”. It features a portrait of William Bell Wait. He was a teacher and Principal of the school from 1863 to 1905. Under him, the name of the school was changed to The New York Institute for the Education of the Blind.



The panel has the following text: In the 1830s, the blind in America read using embossed books, a difficult process nuanced by the subtle tactile curves and angles in Roman letters. Louis Braille, a young blind French student studied a system of writing developed by M. Charles Barbier and was used as a secret code by the French military. In 1828, Braille simplified this system into a cell of six points, where each cell is up to 3 dots high and 2 dots wide.

By 1860, a modified American Braille code was adopted at several blind schools across America. In 1868, William Bell Wait, Principal at the New York Institute for the Blind, published the New York Point system using 2 vertical dots and from 1 to 4 horizontal dots. Wait argued this modification saved space on the page. Wait, a dedicated inventor, also designed the Kleidograph, a typewriter for the blind that used New York Point, and manufactured books with the stereograph printing press. For many years a bitter and controversial debate raged between the proponents of American Braille, New York Point and the form of Braille used in the United Kingdom.

Other people have developed reading codes over the years. Moon type, invented by William Moon, a man who was blinded by scarlet fever, used an

embossed type of simplified shapes of print letters. Samuel Perkins Howe, Principal of the Perkins School for the Blind in Boston, developed Boston Line Type. By 1904, Charles Holmes, a Perkins official stated, “We have at present 5 distinct codes. In order to avail himself to the full range of literature—the blind reader must learn, and keep well up in all these codes. How would our seeing friends stand for such a state of affairs in type?” In 1916, a committee formally issued a report advocating the universal use of Braille for all English speaking countries.

Not until 1932 did organizations representing blind readers in the English-speaking world agree upon a unified code of tactile reading. Braille was one of the options.

1828 - 1932

1828 - Louis Braille publishes Braille

1868 -Wait invents NY Point

1904 - Moon type, Boston Line type, Braille, and New York Point all in use.

1932 - Standard English Braille adopted by the Uniform Type Committee

Glass Display Case 2– William Bell Wait



This glass case has various booklets and pamphlets written by Mr. Wait on New York Point code. During his time, Point was widely used by schools for the blind in the United States. The 1910 United States Census lists 57% of the respondents were using New York Point. Mary Ingalls, of the *Little House on the Prairie* books learned Point while attending the Iowa Braille Sight Saving School in the late 1870s and 80s.

The William Bell Wait pamphlets in the case have the following titles:

- Three Special Studies of the Sociology of the Blind
- Key to the New York Point System of Tangible Writing and Printing for Literature, Instrumental and Vocal Music, and Mathematics, designed for the use of the blind

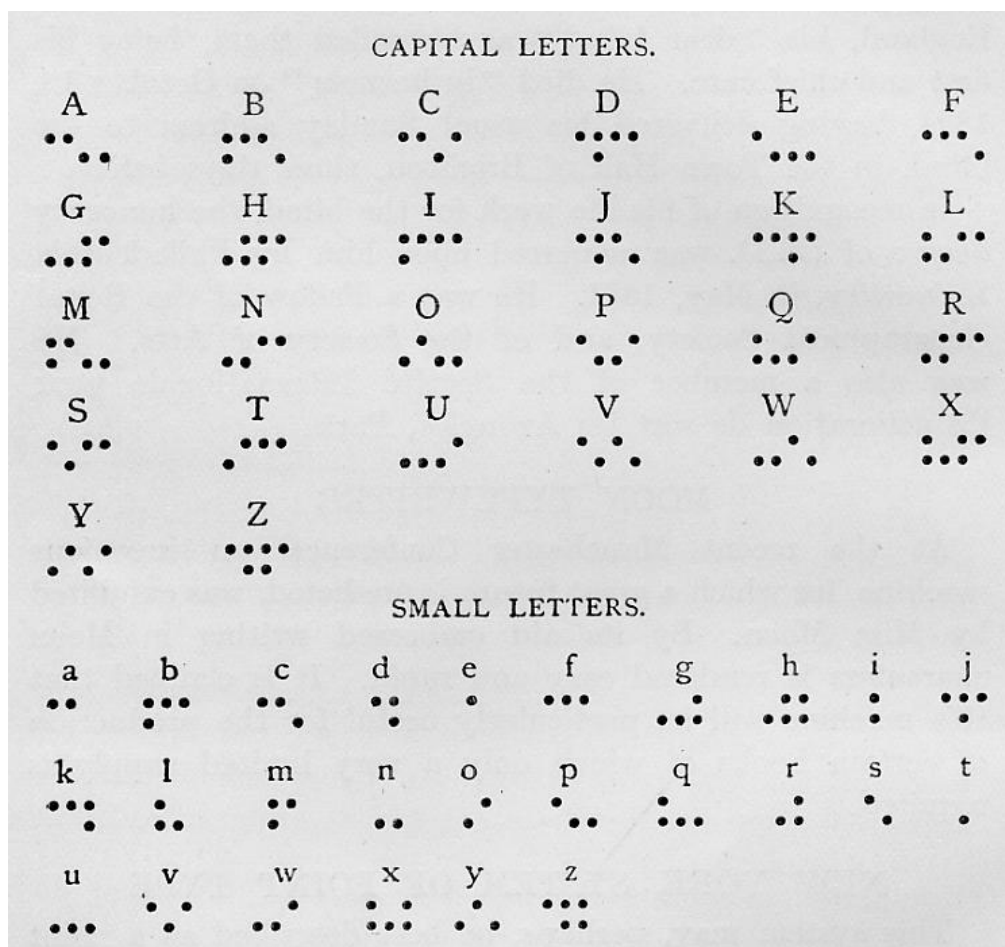
- The Braille and the New York Systems of point writing compared by the Executive Council of the British and Foreign Blind Association, for promoting the education and employment of the blind (London – 1874)
- New Aspects of the Uniform Type Folly – An analysis of the Scheme to Destroy New York Point, American Braille, Roman Line and Moon Type, together with their Vast Accumulated resources of every kind; Secure the Adaptation of British Braille; and Create a Type Trust under the Control of an International Committee Composed of only English-Speaking Members, with Headquarters in a Foreign Country.
- The New York Point – First Primer. This teaching Primer is displayed in print and New York Point. An open copy of the Primer in Point is in the center of the case.

New York Point

The most widely used by schools for the blind in the United States in the late 1800s.

The 1910 US Census lists 57% of respondents using NY Point.

Mary Ingalls, of the Little House books learned Point at Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School in the late 1870s and 80s.



Canvas Poster Photos of Students

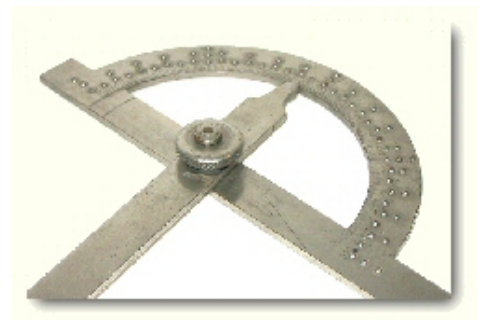
On the wall is a 5 feet by 3 feet photograph which shows five female students practicing on Oliver typewriters. Four of the girls have their backs to the camera and are seated at a long table using the typewriter. In the foreground is another student at a table seated next to an older woman presumably the instructor.



There is an old library table below the photograph that will be used for hands-on exploring of items from the archive. Here you can explore various adaptive aids such as a carpenter level, protractor, and writing technology from the past such as a New York Point slate.



This area will also house various albums and books from the archive.



Glass Display Case 3 – New York Highlanders

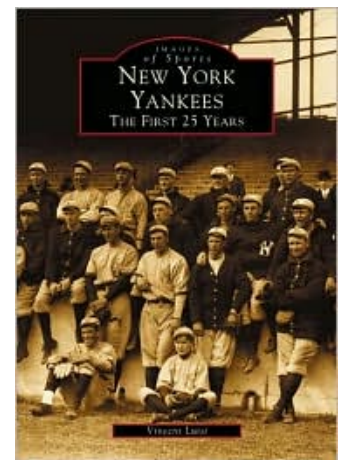
Before finally deciding to move to The Bronx, the school managers purchased a large plot of land in Washington Heights. A section of the property bounded by Broadway, 165th Street, Fort Washington Avenue and 168th Street was leased in 1903 for 10 years for use by the baseball team, then known as the New York Highlanders.



On the top of the display case are two items displayed. A replica of the 1903 New York Highlander baseball cap with a stylish N Y at the top left corner. The team did not use the current interlocked NY until later years. At the top right corner is a book about the history of the Yankees titled “New York Yankees: The First 25 Years”.

The display case has a copy of the 1903 contract with the Greater New York Baseball Association the owners of the Highlanders. The team was later to be known as the New York Yankees when they started playing at the Polo Grounds in 1913.

There is a print that shows the wooden stadium that was built on the school property. The stadium was called

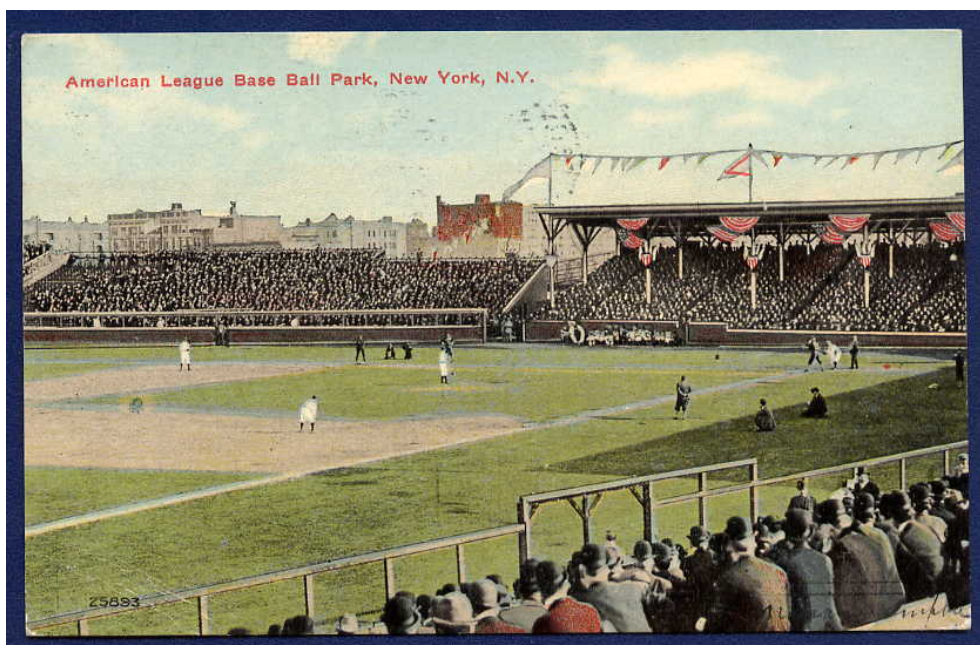


Hilltop Park. Also, it was the temporary home of the New York Giants during a 2 month period in 1911 while the Polo Grounds was being rebuilt after a fire. The Hilltop site is now the campus of Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center.

There are three photographs in the case. One is a photo of several baseball players dressed in the now famous pinstriped uniforms as they first appeared in 1912. The ball player featured in the photograph is Bill Stumpf. The two other images are of the stadium that shows the home plate area, the base paths, center field with Washington Heights apartments in the background. One of the photos shows hundreds fans sitting on the field and viewing the game within a few feet of the base paths.

Hilltop Park had the following statistics:

- Opened: April 30, 1903
- Closed October 5, 1912
- Demolished: 1914
- Cost: \$75,000
- Dimensions:
 - Left Field foul line – 365 feet, Center Field – 542 feet
 - Right Field foul line – 400 feet, Capacity 16,000 persons



The Fanny Crosby Reading Room



This room is dedicated to the famous American hymn writer and poetess Fanny Crosby. As a pupil and as a teacher, Fanny spent 35 years at the school. She was often asked to entertain visitors with her poems, and she frequently met with presidents, generals and other dignitaries. She was asked to play at President Grant's Funeral. Her first book of poems was published in 1844 and was called *The Blind Girl and Other Poems*.

The top shelf of the bookcase has a collection of biographies and autobiographies about her. She supported herself by selling her hymns and it is said she wrote over 8,000. One of her biographies by Bernard Ruffin is available in Bookshare for download. Ruffin in his book has the following to say about her:

“Fanny’s lifetime had spanned many changes in America. She had seen the invention of the telephone, as well as the telegraph, steam engine, phonograph, motion picture, bicycle, typewriter, X-ray, elevator, sewing machine, anesthetics, mower, submarine, automobile, airplane, and radio. She did not belong to that class of people who, looking back over the years, think the old times better than our own. As she watched with wonder and great interest the developments of her lifetime and had no great criticism for modern inventions.”



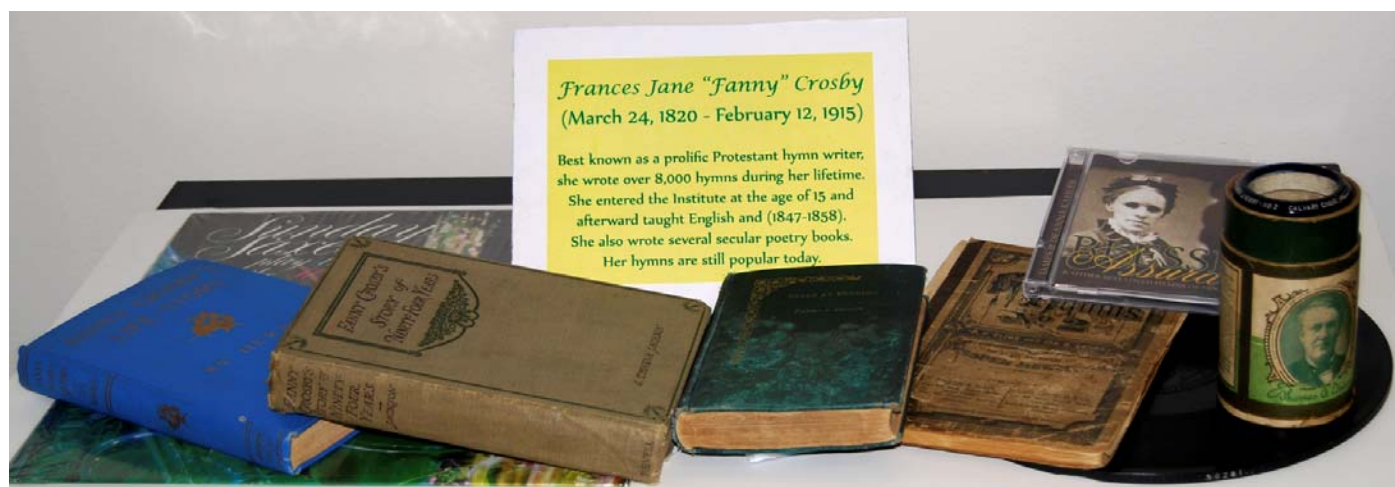
The second shelf of the bookcase has a selection of books written by graduates from the Institute. H. A Fuller attended the school from 1856 to 1860 and authored books about blindness. There is a photograph of him on the bookcase.

Anna C. Smith and Sarah DeKroyft also wrote memoirs that details their early lives at the school and dealing with blindness.

The third shelf has Annual Reports and historical documents. The first annual report was produced in 1833. There are some volumes of professional journals about blindness from the 19th century. There are a few books about the founders of some of the first schools for the blind. The fourth shelf has 3 large books. One is about The Bronx, a book about Louis Braille and the 150th Anniversary book of the American Printing house for the blind.

On the bookshelves are 2 cast iron document embossers that when pressed on paper will produce the original seal of the New York Institution for the Blind. Even today, a similar embosser is used to certify important documents like student transcripts. These ornate embossers have a lion's head decoration and are very heavy. They are used on the bookcase as bookends.

The room also contains two enclosed plexiglass cases with Fanny Crosby memorabilia. The one on the file cabinet by the door has over 100 years history of Crosby musical recording items including an Edison Cylinder circa 1905, an acoustic recording from the 1920s, a vinyl album from the 1960's and a CD from 2009.

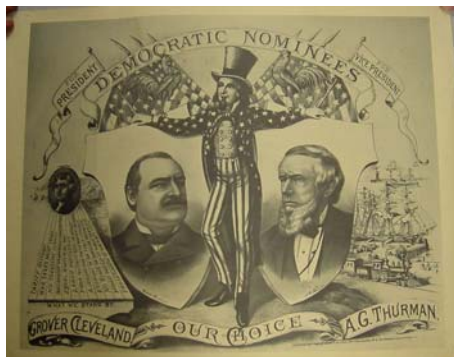


The second plexiglass case has several hymnbooks and they are open to some of her most famous hymns like "Blessed Assurance" and "Safe In the Arms of Jesus", which are two of her most famous hymns. The NYI Website on Fanny Crosby contains links to a website by a company that has dozens audio files of her hymns.

Wall Decorations

On the walls of the Room are several items of historical interest. On the wall by the light switch is an early portrait of Fanny Crosby and below that is her 1915 New York Times obituary. She was ninety-four years old.

Over the desk is a large framed photograph taken of the children of the Institute on the stage of the auditorium taken around 1890 and a second picture of a teacher of the school tuning one of the pianos.



Over the love seat is a picture frame that contains a reproduction of a political campaign poster from the 1888 presidential campaign of Grover Cleveland. As a young man, he was employed as a teacher and was a friend of Fanny Crosby. Grover Cleveland was elected twice as President of the United States. He is the only President that did not have 2 consecutive terms

and was our 22nd and 24th President.

On the wall next to the love seat is a wood frame that contains 9 postcards produced around 1925 around the time the school moved to Pelham Parkway. These 3 inch by 5 inch postcards were sold as souvenirs to visitors.



- Top Row:
1. "Lower school" (now known as Van Cleve Hall)
 2. The school building in Manhattan
 3. "Boys Cloister"
- Middle Row:
4. "Some little mothers out for an airing"
– postcard shows 6 little girls pushing a doll carriage
 5. "Track Team of 1930"
 6. "Wood-Russ House"
- Bottom Row:
7. One of the several buildings used as pupils' housing - postcard is a view of Crosby Phelps
 8. Air View of the central portion of the campus
 9. Looking west on Pelham Parkway

In a black frame is a reproduction of a poem written by Fanny Crosby in support of the Union cause during the Civil War. The poem is titled “Dixie for the Union by Fanny Crosby – As sung in the Public Schools”. Fanny was very patriotic and frequently she was asked to recite spontaneous poems for visiting dignitaries. This one would have been sung to tune of “Dixieland” a favorite song of the rebellious Southern states. The first stanza of the four on the poster is:

On, ye Patriots, to the battle
Hear Fort Moultrie’s cannon rattle:
Chorus: Away – Away – away to the battle!
Go, meet those Southern traitors,
With iron will,
And should your courage falter, Boys
Remember Bunker Hill – Hurrah
Chorus: Hurrah – Hurrah, The Stars and Stripes forever
Hurrah – Hurrah, Our Union shall not sever.

DIXIE FOR
THE UNION.
By Fanny Crosby. — As sung in the Public Schools.
